

**Minutes of the July 7, 2025 Meeting of the Sawyer County
Economic Development and UW-Extension Committee
of the Sawyer County Board of Supervisors
Board Room; Sawyer County**



Voting Committee Members Present:

- ☒ Chair: John Righeimer
- ☒ Vice Chair: Stacey Hessel
- ☒ Tom Duffy
- ☒ Steve Kariainen
- ☒ Randy Neumann

Mike Markgren
Liz Klein
Lori Baltrusis- Virtual
Mindy Simons
Jim Miller

Others Present:

Donna Knuckey
Ann Larson
Adam Lamoureux- Virtual
Jason Laumann- Virtual

Call to Order – Chair Righeimer called the meeting to order at 8:30 am.

Certification of Compliance with the open meeting law was met. Roll Call was taken. Quorum was met.

Meeting Agenda -- Set

Public Comments – None

Minutes from the previous meeting dated: June 9, 2025

Motion to approve made by: Mr. Duffy Second by: Mr. Neumann
Motion carried without negative vote.

Sawyer County Agricultural Fair Association—
No report

Hayward Lakes Visitors & Convention Bureau Report—

Ms. Simons reported on the release of the state 2024 Economic Impact Report which shows Sawyer County having record-breaking tourism numbers for the fourth consecutive year. The June Google campaign shows areas of interest in fishing and camping. June saw a 30% increase in Facebook traffic and 59% increase on Instagram. The Fred Thomas Resort in Birchwood is celebrating its 100 year anniversary this Saturday with an open house.

University of Wisconsin-Extension Department Report –

Ms. Baltrusis updated the committee on strategic planning and stated that the FoodWise program funding has been cut.

Historical Society –
No report

NWRPC Report—

Jim Miller reviewed highlights from a 453 page tourism marketing study that shows increasing Sawyer County tourism. Priorities to make this sustainable include looking ahead for traffic, parking, signage, sanitation/environmental impact, cellular phone service, EMS and emergency personnel, and addressing the housing shortage. Attracting young people to live and work in Sawyer County is a key priority. Jason Laumann discussed “destination management” as an approach to future planning.

Apostle Island National Park Designation—

A previously discussed Resolution Supporting the Designation of Apostle Islands as a National Park for consideration by the county board was approved on a motion by: Mr. Duffy Second by: Mr. Kariainen
Motion carried without negative vote.

SC/LCO Economic Development Corporation Report—

Mr. Lamoureux updated the committee on conversations with Kwik Trip to sell the \$1.2M parcel, consultations with Custom One housing developers, final edits to the “Live, Work & Play in Sawyer County” marketing video, business promotional videos the EDC made for 3 Fly Sisters, The Lot, and Empire Lighting, hosting cybersecurity business seminars to avoid fraud, and stated that HUBZone is for all of Sawyer County. The SC/LCO EDC MOU with the county is signed.

Library Updates—

Winter-- The circulation reports were presented. Many visitors use the library as a place to meet and use the WiFi. Ms. Knuckey updated the committee on summer programs at the Winter Library and fundraising efforts by Friends of the Library to offset rising costs without asking for an increase in the county budget.

Shermann Weiss— The circulation reports were provided. Ms. Larson updated the committee on summer programs, rising costs, building repair issues, and fundraising efforts. Many visitors and local groups use the library for meetings and a place to work. Statistical analysis shows the library brings an estimated value of nearly \$2M to county residents.

Trail Reports--

No reports

Board Appointed Committee Updates –

No reports

Correspondence, Reports from Conferences—

No reports

Future Agenda Items – None

Meeting Date/Time – The next meeting of the Economic Development and UW-Extension Committee will be Monday, August 11 at 8:30 am in the Board Room.

Meeting adjourned at 9:45 am

Minutes recorded by Liz Klein, County Clerk